

Former CBA Dean Tyrone Black Responds – Details Below!

Who is Running the CoB?

Ty Black “resigned” in 1997. Rod Posey was Interim Dean from 1997 to 1998. Bill Gunther was hired in 1998 and was fired in January 2003. Harold Doty was hired in June 2003 and “resigned” in April 2007. Alvin Williams became Interim Dean in April 2007 and vows to leave that office by July 2008.

Farhang Niroomand and Joe Peyrefitte have been Associate Dean.

Jim Crockett, Bob Smith, Rod Posey, and Stan Lewis have been ACC/SAIS chairs. Alvin Williams, Barry Babin, and Tony Henthorne have been MGT/MKT chairs. George Carter, Alex Hamwi, and Mark Klinedinst have been ECO/EFIB chairs.

It seems that no matter who is “in charge” of the CoB, the organization keeps sliding downhill. Transparency was dead well before the decade of the 1990’s. Academic rigor took a gut shot when Doty came to Hattiesburg. Civility, cordiality, professionalism, and integrity hit the door soon thereafter. In Doty’s last days, Stephen Bushardt delivered a knockout blow to equality and fairness when he acted as ramrod for the “separate but equal” faculty evaluation system -- now department chairs are free to abuse their faculty at will and with impunity.

With all of the changes in leadership positions, an outsider might assume that policy in the building has changed a lot, but it hasn’t. It seems the CoB is still run out of the parlors of a select few faculty and administrators, most of whom prefer anonymity to fame, at least in their roles as puppeteers. In truth, it’s hard to pinpoint exactly who IS running the CoB. Maybe it would be easier to nail down who IS NOT running the CoB.

Real scholars are not running the CoB. If they were, then real scholarship would be valued rather than the pay-for-play outlets that have proliferated under Gunther’s (and especially) Doty’s deanships. If real scholars ran the CoB, John Lambert would have been judged against a real scholarship yardstick rather than the rigged one that found him worthy. Evaluations would be conducted with peer-reviewed journal ranking lists, and nobody would get substantially more credit for a revise and resubmit letter than another person got for a peer-reviewed journal article, regardless of outlet. No, real scholars don’t run the CoB.

Fair people don’t run the CoB. If fair people ran the CoB, then evaluation systems would be wholly objective instead of substantially subjective. Teaching loads would be shared equally, and service responsibilities would be as well. If an individual bore a heavy burden in one semester, that individual would get a break the very next semester. No one faculty member would have multiple University-level service assignments while others had none. No faculty member

would teach five days per week AND teach multiple night classes AND teach multiple preparations AND teach in Hattiesburg and at the Gulf Coast campus. No, fair people don't run the CoB.

People with a sense of professionalism don't run the CoB. In academics, professionalism manifests itself through quality scholarship (see above), quality teaching, and meaningful service. If professionals ran the CoB, classes would be rigorous with grades appropriate for the course level. If professionals ran the CoB, classes would be held for the entire class period, not for only 30 minutes on a 2 ½ hour night class. If professionals ran the CoB, there'd be fewer multiple choice exams in upper level courses and more adherence to the principles of "old timey" academics --- you remember, when teachers actually taught the material rather than simply reciting the bullet points on Power Point slides. There'd be more facts delivered and fewer pop culture book reports. If professionals ran the CoB, individuals would be evaluated based on their performance, not on their personalities. If professionals ran the CoB, external service that benefited the CoB or that increased its reputation would be valued more highly than in-house, check-box committee meetings. It's safe to say that professionals don't run the CoB.

Public servants don't run the CoB. Working at USM is a public service position, yet many of the good ol' boys treat the CoB like it's their private partnership, as if it were a law firm or accounting firm that they built on their own. No, USM is a public institution built with the hard earned dollars of the Mississippi taxpayer. Those who work at USM have the obligation to be good stewards of the public's money, to give an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, and to take good care of the students who enter Greene Hall's doors. Decisions would be made not on the basis of what is easiest or most convenient for anyone but on the basis of what truly adds to a student's lifelong well being. No, there aren't any real public servants running the CoB.

So, there aren't any real scholars, fair people, professionals, or true public servants running the CoB. What does that leave? To tell the truth, I'm not sure. Whoever they are, they don't put students first, they don't put the public first, and they don't put their colleagues first. They put themselves first, second, and last, they couch their behavior in terms of incentives, equity theories, or tradition, and they try to convince everyone within earshot that they really are thoughtful, respectable, distinguished professionals who are overworked and underpaid.

Hattiesburg has seen too much of these folks, though, and whether face to face or behind their backs, these individuals are treated with contempt and disdain. Yet these people continue to drive the CoB. And we wonder why the Public doesn't respect Academics.

Former CBA Dean Tyrone Black Responds [14-May-07]

Former CBA Dean Tyrone Black contacted USMNEWS.NET on 14-May-07 to state that he stepped down from the position of Dean of USM's College of Business Administration in 1997 for two reasons: (1) He simply wished to leave the Dean's office, and (2) he wanted to return to teaching. Black remained on staff in the EFIB as a professor of economics until the end of fall 2005, at which point his "phased retirement" from USM was completed. In the post-Dean period Black taught international economics, and he spent the final part of that period in the CoB as the Kaetsu Distinguished Professor of International Business. Interim CoB Dean Alvin Williams, professor of marketing, now holds the Kaetsu Distinguished Professorship in IB.